

NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

May 17, 2006

A meeting of the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) was held on Wednesday, May 17, 2006, in the Nevada City Council Chambers, 317 Broad Street, Nevada City, CA. The meeting was scheduled for 8:30 a.m.

Members Present: Nate Beason, Tim Brady, Patti Ingram, Russ Steele, Robin Sutherland, Conley Weaver

Members Absent: Josh Susman

Staff Present: Dan Landon, Executive Director; Nancy Holman, Administrative Services Officer; Mike Woodman, Transportation Planner; Toni Perry, Administrative Assistant

Standing Orders: Chairman Weaver convened the Nevada County Transportation Commission meeting at 8:35 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

1. Financial Reports

A. February and March 2006

There was no discussion on the February and March Financial Reports.

2. Correspondence

G. Office of the Governor - Response to a letter from NCTC regarding safety improvements on SR 49. 4/28/06, File 1200.4.

Executive Director Landon noted on Item 2-G that Governor Schwarzenegger's office responded to the Commission's letter regarding State Route (SR) 49 Highway Safety Improvements.

3. Executive Director's Report

3.1 SR 49 Safety Task Force

Executive Director Landon highlighted some of the activities of the SR 49 Safety Task Force. Mr. Landon reported there was a summary attached to this report of the California Highway Patrol (CHP) regarding enforcement activities on the corridor, and noted a decrease in accidents. Bruce Jones and Chet Krage, members of the Task Force, were in attendance and commented on planned activities. Mr. Jones summarized the accomplishments their group achieved, in cooperation with Caltrans, the NCTC, CHP, and County officials.

Chet Krage said the safety conditions are much better on SR 49, but he believes there is still a lot to be done. He requested the NCTC do two things:

- 1) The SR 49 Safety Task Force is aware that the funding schedule from the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for the La Barr Meadows construction project on SR 49 has slipped. Mr. Krage questioned what could be done to restore the funding to the original schedule.
- 2) Mr. Krage stated the NCTC 06/07 Overall Work Program has Nevada County requesting the NCTC staff look at interim improvements, like three lane sections in dangerous portions of SR 49. He believes the push must be initiated by the Commission in order to get a project through the environmental review and ready for construction.

Executive Director Landon responded that the slippage of funds on the SR 49 project in the vicinity of La Barr Meadows was due to state cash flow issues. Mr. Landon said he would ask Winder Bajwa, Project Manager for Caltrans, to give the Commission more information regarding the project schedule at the next NCTC meeting.

Commissioner Beason asked when the slippage occurred. Mr. Landon said it showed in December, when the Commission reviewed the RTIP (Regional Transportation Improvement Program), that the construction year had gone back one year based on State cash flow. Commissioner Beason asked that the next time there is a slippage, that the Commission be briefed of the change. Mr. Landon believed he had pointed out the year slippage when that project was discussed. Commissioner Ingram said she did recall the issue was mentioned. Chairman Weaver asked that in the future, when an issue like that occurs, it would be red flagged.

Commissioner Brady asked the status of the SR 49 rumble strip project and if it would still be installed this summer. Executive Director Landon replied that it is moving forward and that Caltrans is putting specifications together to get ready to go out to bid. Commissioner Brady asked how that would segway with staff's study of the three lane options on SR 49. Mr. Landon said as staff looks at the next opportunity to fund a project, rather than waiting for funding to do a full widening, he would look at areas where it would be feasible to add a passing lane or third lane for turning opportunities, so construction is moving forward in affordable segments.

3.2 Presentations to the Economic Resource Council and Nevada County LAFCo

Executive Director Landon noted that he made presentations to the Nevada County Economic Resource Council (ERC) and Nevada County LAFCo (Local Agency Formation Commission) during April. He said both agencies appreciated getting a better understanding of NCTC's role and activities, in particular the sales tax survey. Commissioner Steele stated that Mr. Landon did an outstanding job explaining the connection between economics and transportation at two separate ERC meetings, including the funding issues, and it was well received by the ERC. Commissioner Steele believes it would be important for an NCTC Commissioner to also be on the Board for the ERC because of the nexus between transportation and economic development.

3.3 Idaho-Maryland/East Main Intersection Roundabout Project

Tim Kiser, Grass Valley City Engineer, reported that the City of Grass Valley has gone through the request for proposal process and held interviews with five consultants for the roundabout project.

Staff will be going to the City Council on May 23rd with the preferred consultant for the approval to negotiate a contract. He reported on May 9th the City Council approved staff's proposed fee update that included this project into the fee program. This program will insure funding into the project until the future update of the Regional Transportation Mitigation Fee (RTMF) program. After the May 23rd meeting, Mr. Kiser is hoping to execute final contracts within two weeks. Then the consultant will complete the preliminary design by late fall or early winter, the environmental process is slated for completion by December 2006, and the plan is to start construction in the spring of 2007.

3.4 Governor Schwarzenegger's Strategic Growth Plan/Infrastructure Bond

Executive Director Landon briefly discussed the bond package that the legislature has approved for the November ballot, which includes \$19 billion for transportation. The Governor is proposing full restoration of Prop. 42 as a part of the bond package and repayment of the loans over a ten year period, without interest.

4. Caltrans District 3

Project Status Report – Winder Bajwa, Caltrans Project Manager for Nevada County, was not present at the meeting.

Executive Director Landon gave a brief summary of project activity that has occurred since the last NCTC meeting.

- *Idaho-Maryland/East Main Street Roundabout* – Caltrans has given conceptual approval for the roundabout alternative to the City of Grass Valley. Since the City is the lead agency, Caltrans recommended taking the project off the Caltrans Status Report.
- *Safety Realignment and Widening of SR 20* – The California Transportation Commission (CTC) has approved \$26.1 million for construction of the SR 20 safety improvements. Caltrans is advertising for the project and anticipates starting construction late summer 2006.
- *Dorsey Drive Interchange* – The comments period ended on the Environmental Document and Caltrans is finalizing the document. They expect to complete the review and finalize the Project Approval segment by the end of the fiscal year June 30, 2006, and then begin work on the design. Caltrans will meet with the City of Grass Valley in the near future to discuss how they will proceed with the design, and the City's role.

Commissioner Brady asked for scheduled activity on the Dorsey Drive project for the next eighteen months. Executive Director Landon responded the next two key steps would be completion of the Environmental Document by June 30th. And then Caltrans and the City will meet to get clear direction on how the design will proceed. Caltrans would also like to do some value analysis, i.e. relook at the project and be sure it is going in the direction that the City wants it to go, to be sure they have looked at all the appropriate cost mitigation measures, that it is within a scope they will be able to deal with, and that they are using the right processes and procedures. Commissioner Brady asked the timeline on the Value Engineering and Design Study. Mr. Landon responded the design work will continue for the next year, but the Value Analysis would be a thirty-

day process. Caltrans will hold a two to three day workshop, conduct an intense review of all the aspects of the project, and come back with a report to the City, NCTC staff, and possibly County staff. He believes the report will be complete by fall and brought back to the NCTC.

- *SR 49 Five Lane Widening at the La Barr Meadows Road Intersection* – The Technical Environmental studies have been completed. The draft Environmental Document is scheduled for release in July 2006 for review, and a public workshop will be held during the circulation period of the document. Caltrans has identified two issues as a part of the environmental process that they will discuss at length with the community: (1) The issue of potentially using sound walls in this segment of roadway; (2) The issue of wildlife crossings at this intersection.
- *SR 49 Shoulder Widening Between Lime Kiln Road and Pekolee Road* – Work has resumed after the winter suspension. Caltrans will restore the shoulders from the winter storm damage, and will be completing construction this summer.
- *Truckee SR 89 Mousehole* – The CTC had an informational item on their April meeting agenda regarding the Town of Truckee's request to give lead agency status on the Mousehole project back to Caltrans. There was no discussion on it and it will be voted on at the June CTC meeting as a consent item. It is proceeding as planned.
- *Safety Project to Install a Rumble Strip on the Centerline of SR 49 from Combie/Wolf Road to Grass Valley* – The Project Development activities are underway and the construction is scheduled to start August or September and be completed by mid-October 2006.

5. Public Opinion Survey

Executive Director Landon introduced John Fairbank, of Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin and Associates, who gave a PowerPoint presentation to summarize the findings from the countywide Public Opinion Survey his company conducted on a potential sales tax measure. Mr. Fairbank noted there were several very clear trends among the voters that indicated a good chance of passing a potential sales tax measure. He stated the public is willing to address road safety, pothole repair, highway and street repairs, and traffic congestion. They interviewed 654 people of various walks of life and interest groups throughout Nevada County, but in particular from the three population centers of the City of Grass Valley, Nevada City, and the Town of Truckee. When asked what the most serious problem was facing the residents of Nevada County that they would like to see local government do something about, thirty-nine percent of the responses referred to some type of transportation problems as their highest concern. When they asked the public what the most serious transportation problem was facing Nevada County, in their own words, they responded that the roadways and city streets need repair. Questions about support for certain regional projects were only asked in the region where the project was located. The survey was conducted around April 6th for several days.

Mr. Fairbank said what was significant about Nevada County is the responses are over the two-thirds threshold necessary to pass a measure (68%), and there is a very strong definite yes. He also stated the transportation problems in Nevada County seemed to have become a bipartisan issue. The Commissioners requested to receive copies of the final report.

Following Mr. Fairbank's presentation, Commissioners asked questions and made comments about the survey results. Chairman Weaver mentioned that Nevada City and the City of Grass Valley are planning to put a local one-half cent sales tax measure on the November ballot. He stated that Nevada City funds collected from a sales tax measure would be used only to repair Nevada City streets. Commissioner Ingram shared that the City of Grass Valley has specified four projects that will benefit from the sales tax measure. Mr. Fairbank added that even though the Town of Truckee already has a sales tax measure, 65% of the Truckee residents supported this new measure. Mr. Landon stated the Town of Truckee was questioned based on the fact that if a countywide measure were to pass, then the current Truckee measure would sunset early as the new measure began. Executive Director Landon said that the proposed individual sales tax measures in Grass Valley and Nevada City were not represented in the survey. This survey represented one-half cent sales tax countywide.

Commissioner Beason said the Board of Supervisors had not formally discussed this measure. Commissioner Ingram thought it would be too soon to get the measure supported countywide this November, but it would be a possible option in two years. Chet Krage, a citizen and a member of the Transit Services Commission, highlighted that in the survey it was stated that a portion of the money from a sales tax measure would be used for public transportation. Mr. Krage said if the unincorporated part of the County were to go forward to try to levy their half-cent sales tax measure, they would be funding even more of the transit services, rather than that being shared by the cities where most of the transit service is provided. Commissioner Beason concurred that if the County were to initiate a sales tax measure countywide, it would be up to the County and the jurisdictions to help finance transit services as a part of the measure. Commissioner Beason thought there would be a need to set up a Taxing Authority and believed there would be a tax sharing agreement to sort out details.

At the conclusion of the Commission discussion, Executive Director Landon noted he outlined in the memo to the Commission the five steps that would have to occur for a countywide measure to take effect. He questioned if the Commission would like NCTC staff to initiate a discussion about the countywide measure, or would the Commission like to wait and have the Board of Supervisors initiate it through their staff. Commissioner Brady said it is up to the jurisdictions to take it from here. Mr. Fairbank stated that his firm does not run campaigns, but in these measures, they are usually one of the consultants at the table to help get negotiations in place.

Bruce Jones, a member of the Citizens for Highway 49 Safety of South Nevada County, asked if the County goes forward with the sales tax measure, to specifically earmark funding for the widening project on SR 49. Executive Director Landon pointed out that the SR 49 safety improvements were western Nevada County's highest polled project.

Commissioner Beason said he would put the sales tax issue on the June 13th Board of Supervisors agenda. Commissioner Brady said the County would benefit greater if it were a countywide tax, so he encouraged the Board of Supervisors to research that possibility.

Chairman Weaver asked for a break at 9:55 a.m. The meeting resumed at 10:03 a.m.

CONSENT ITEMS

6. NCTC Minutes. February 15, 2006; March 15, 2006. *Approved.*

7. Revised Findings of Apportionment for 2006/07. *Adopted Resolution 06-10 to accept the State Department of Finance's updated population estimate for Nevada County, and approve the Revised Findings of Apportionment for FY 2006/07.*
8. The Town of Truckee's Request for NCTC's Approval of Certifications and Assurances of their FY 2004/05 FTA 5311 Grant Application Package in the Amount of \$24,742. *Adopted Resolution 06-11 to attest that NCTC certifies and assures that the Town of Truckee's Transit Division has met the requirements for applying for FTA 5311 grant funds.*
9. Allocation Request from Gold Country Telecare, Inc. *Adopted Resolution 06-12 approving the allocation request from Telecare of Community Transit Service funds in the amount of \$42,400 for the purchase of vehicles and scheduling software for FY 2006/07.*
11. Allocation Request from Nevada City for Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) Funds. *Adopted Resolution 06-14 to approve the allocation of RSTP funds in the amount of \$45,219 for Nevada City citywide street improvements.*

Executive Director Landon stated Nevada County staff requested that Items 10, 12, and 13 on the agenda be pulled from the Consent Calendar.

Commissioner Beason made a motion to approve the Consent Calendar, with the exception of Items 10, 12, and 13. Commissioner Sutherland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Request from Nevada County to expend funds in the Transit Vehicle Refurbishment/Replacement Fund Account and a request for a loan of funds to facilitate the purchase of buses.

Bill Derrick, Transit Services Manager, explained he would like to withdraw this item since they found it unnecessary, with funds remaining in the budget, to take this action. He said the previous action taken regarding the Vehicle Replacement Reserve in January of 2006 will stand and will cover the vehicle purchase.

Commissioner Sutherland made a motion to approve removal of Item 10 from the agenda. Commissioner Beason seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

12. NCTC's Support of Constitutional Amendment

Executive Director Landon stated that, when the California Legislature adopted going forward with the State bond measure in November, the group supporting this constitutional amendment determined not to go forward with the amendment, therefore no action was required on Item 12.

13. 2006/07 Overall Work Program

The Commission discussed comments made by Nevada City opposing the widening of SR 49. Commissioner Beason mentioned that the recent survey indicated improvements to SR 49 were a top priority by the voters polled, yet Nevada City is opposed because the SR 49 widening project is allegedly growth inducing. Executive Director Landon stated that in response to Nevada City's comment on page two of the memo, staff's proposal is embodied as follows: "NCTC is responsible for the preparation and adoption of the Nevada County Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which

documents the regional transportation needs and sets forth an Action Plan to meet those needs. The projects identified in the RTP are based on the adopted General Plans of Nevada County, Nevada City, Grass Valley, and the Town of Truckee. Therefore, the proposed widening of SR 49 is a function of the growth anticipated and planned for in the General Plans adopted by these member agencies. In order for the NCTC to remove the proposed widening of SR 49 from the RTP and the annual Overall Work Program, the General Plans of its member agencies would need to be changed in such a manner as to no longer require widening of the facility.” Chairman Weaver stated that Nevada City unanimously opposes the widening of SR 49 and may have to revise their General Plan to continue to oppose it.

Commissioner Beason stated the position the County has taken on SR 49 is to do the widening incrementally, because of funding. The County would also like to look at SR 49 as a corridor versus a road, to protect the landscape. He would like to see all the jurisdictions in agreement to support that concept. Executive Director Landon said each jurisdiction’s General Plan has high legal standing, and the RTP is subservient to them.

Chet Krage, President of South Nevada County Concerned Citizens, strongly suggested the Commissioners set a time to have a reality discussion of what it really means to widen SR 49 because he believes it means different things to different people. He would like to see this topic on a future NCTC agenda for open discussion. He feels there is a lot that could be done to make the road safer, handle more traffic, and preserve the natural beauty.

Commissioner Ingram made a motion to adopt Resolution 06-16 to approve the Final 2006/07 Overall Work Program. Commissioner Sutherland seconded the motion. Under comments, Chairman Weaver reiterated that he approves the Overall Work Program, with the exception as noted that Nevada City has taken. Executive Director Landon asked that the motion approve the resolution and approve the responses to comments received. Commissioner Ingram modified her motion to state this. Commissioner Sutherland seconded the modified motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

14. Grass Valley Request for "Interim" RTMF Update. This item was carried forward from the April 26th NCTC Special Meeting.

Commissioner Ingram thanked Commissioner Beason and Chairman Weaver for allowing this item to return for review on the agenda. She said in lieu of the decision the City of Grass Valley Council made on May 9th at their meeting, and the update provided by Tim Kiser, it is no longer necessary to discuss this item any further.

Commissioner Ingram withdrew Item 14 from the agenda. Chairman Weaver acknowledged the withdrawal.

15. Staff Prioritization of Projects and Workshop Schedule

Executive Director Landon provided the Commissioners with a task map outlining staff’s activity schedule through the calendar year 2006. Based on the time frame to accomplish the major priority projects, such as the RTMF Update, it is staff’s recommendation to not hold a workshop in June, and

to postpone additional workshops through the end of calendar year 2006. A discussion ensued that reviewed the staff project list and staff priorities.

Commissioner Beason made a motion to not hold any additional workshops for the remainder of the 2006 calendar year. Chairman Weaver agreed, but asked to hold open the possibility to call a special meeting if the need arises. Commissioner Steele seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

16. Annual Transit Needs Assessment

Executive Director Landon explained this is an annual process regarding local transportation funds. An assessment is required each year to determine what the unmet needs are for transit services in our community, and if there are needs that are reasonable to meet. Mr. Landon stated that Transportation Planner Michael Woodman was the principal staff member working on the project and he worked with the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC), who provided their input on the assessment for FY 2005/06. Mr. Landon said after completing the needs assessment process, the staff recommendation was that there are no unmet needs that are reasonable to meet during the current fiscal year. Staff asked for approval of the findings.

Commissioner Ingram made a motion to approve the Nevada County Transit Needs Assessment for 2005/06 FY and adopt Resolution 06-18. Commissioner Sutherland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

17. 2006/07 Nevada County Transportation Capital Improvement Program

Executive Director Landon explained the reason the NCTC is involved in this decision process is to approve the use of federal funds needed for some of the projects within the Nevada County Capital Improvement Program (CIP). It also gives the NCTC an opportunity to understand the pavement maintenance issues regarding funding for the County, and to assist them in acquiring funding for those projects.

John Rumsey, Senior Engineer for the Nevada County Department of Transportation and Sanitation (DOTS), stated County staff would be taking this document back to the Board of Supervisors in June. He reviewed several projects within the sphere of the City of Grass Valley. One is located at the Town Talk/Brunswick Road intersection, and another is the signalization project at the East Bennett/Greenhorn Road/Brunswick Road intersection. DOTS will be working with Grass Valley staff on the Idaho-Maryland Mine project. Mr. Rumsey said if there are future comments to be made on the CIP, Sue Zajac could be contacted at the County DOTS office.

Commission Ingram asked that the old name of Mulcahy Park on Alta Street in Grass Valley be corrected in the CIP report to list the new name of De Vere Mautino Park. Executive Director Landon noted that, although this CIP represents increased funding over previous years, the maintenance component is about \$1.56 million over the five year program, and at that level the County's Pavement Condition Index is in decline and will be below their goal by 2010. He stated this speaks the need for more maintenance money for the County. John Rumsey stated they are dealing with rapid inflation of materials such as concrete, steel, and asphalt, so the maintenance dollars will not stretch as far as hoped.

No further discussion or action was taken by the Commission.

18. Allocation Request from Nevada City

Executive Director Landon reported this is a request from the City of Nevada City to utilize the remainder of their Local Transportation Funds for this current fiscal year for the citywide street overlay and maintenance program.

Commissioner Steele made a motion to adopt Resolution 06-19 to approve an allocation of \$23,421.01 of Local Transportation Funds for street improvements in Nevada City. Commissioner Brady seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

19. Allocation Request from the City of Grass Valley

Executive Director Landon explained the City of Grass Valley was requesting funding for their 2005/06 Overlay Project and the amount encompasses funds held over for several years, as well as the remainder of the funds for 2005/06.

Commissioner Brady made a motion to adopt Resolution 06-20 to approve an allocation of \$325,406.79 of Local Transportation Funds for the City of Grass Valley's 2005/06 Overlay Project. Commissioner Sutherland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Janelle Black, a citizen of Grass Valley, announced May was National Bike Month and that the current week was National Bike-to-Work Week. She gave several suggestions of ways to encourage bicycle commuting, which included educating the bicyclist how to maneuver safely on the road. She is becoming a certified instructor with the League of American Bicyclists. She encouraged road improvements that would benefit motor vehicles and cyclists, such as fixing potholes and paving shoulders of the roadways. Ms. Black handed out information to the Commissioners for that Friday's National Bike-to-Work Day.

COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Ingram accompanied Ray Patton, a former Park Ranger at the Empire Mine in Grass Valley, and Ron Munson, the current Park Ranger, to a grant funding process in Sacramento to obtain funds for the Empire Mine State Park. The funds will be used to finish a tunnel project, which is about eight hundred yards away from the main shaft. Last week she was informed that the grant was awarded.

Commissioner Steele told of an article in the San Francisco Chronicle that shows how economics are being driven by broadband communications and reducing traffic congestion at the same time. He said that 7% of the working population in Nevada County work from home, according to the 2000 census.

SCHEDULE FOR NEXT MEETING

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 19, 2006 at 9:30 a.m., at the Truckee Town Council Chambers, 10183 Truckee Airport Road, Truckee, CA.

Commissioner Beason announced he would be unable to attend the July meeting.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Commissioner Steele moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Beason seconded the motion. Chairman Weaver adjourned the meeting at 10:32 a.m.

Respectfully submitted: _____
Antoinette Perry, Administrative Assistant

Approved on: _____

By: _____
Chairman Pro Tem
Nevada County Transportation Commission